

DOING SKILLFUL AND CONTINUAL DIAGNOSIS

MSU – SEGMENT 4

Jude Del Preore
NACM Past President
Court Administrator, Burlington County, NJ

Executive Myths

- Executives are systematic, reflective planners
- Executives spend their time carefully organizing the work, delegate to their subordinates and sit back to enjoy the fruits of their labor
- Executives get their work done primarily through subordinates
- Their formal authority is sufficient for this
- Executives rely on “hard data” from management information systems to control their work

Leadership Reality

- Problems abound
- Change is constant
- Fragmentation
- There is no “one best way”
- Effectiveness “all depends”

Effective Diagnosis

● Purpose

- Know what you are doing and why

● People

- People don't fear change. They fear loss.

● Process

- Eighty percent of your people problems are systems problems.

Diagnostic Necessities

- Organization
 - Vision, Mission, Goals, Objectives
 - Feedback Beyond the Boundaries
- Process
 - All value-added
 - Continuous Improvement
- Group
 - Focus on contribution
 - Effective teams
- Individual
 - Focus on contribution
 - Performance management
 - Key conversations

VISION

COURT
STRATEGIC
INITIATIVES

ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN
AND BUDGET

DIVISIONAL GOALS

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE ADVISORY PLANS/EXPECTATIONS

THE KEY QUESTIONS

- What should they hold us accountable for?
- How well are we doing?
- How do you know? (What evidence-based information tell you what you need to know?)

Your Leadership Situation Is Unique

- In God we trust.
- All others must bring data.

The Need for Metrics

- The things that get measured get done.
- If you can't measure it, you can't manage it.
- Inside and outside.
- Leaders anticipate.
- Not only, "How did we do?", but...
- "How are we going to do?"
- A Balanced Scorecard will help.

The Leader as Diagnostician

The Balanced Scorecard

Financial: How do we look to our funding sources?

Customers: How do we look to our customers?

**COURT
STRATEGY**

Internal Processes: Are we improving how work is done?

Future: Can we sustain our performance?

Creating a Scorecard

- In your group, select 2-3 variables for each of the four scorecard areas that you think are the most important for continuously answering two questions:

How are we doing?

Compared to what?

Leadership By Inquiry

- What problems do you see?
- What opportunities do you see?
- What do you need to know from me in order to do your job better?
- What do I need to know from you in order to do my job better?

EXERCISE

Court Performance

The 'State of Confusion' defines civil case delay as decisions pending longer than 18 months. You are a court administrator of a trial court in that state. How does this standard help define the effectiveness of your court? What important information does this standard alone fail to address? What program or soft performance data would you want to collect to augment case backlog statistics?

THE ONGOING ASSESSMENT

The court leader should at all times practice a standard set of diagnostic skills. What does this mean? It means:

- Scrutinizing performance openly (transparency), honestly and continuously
- Thinking outside the box
- Using performance measurement, resource allocation and benchmarking tools
- Making adjustments based on assessments
- Acquiring needed information from databases and reports

EXERCISE

Skillful and Continual Diagnosis

1. Knowledge of methods for avoiding feedback and hearing the 'bad news.' T/F
2. Ability to be inquisitive about and to scrutinize court performance openly, honestly, and continually T/F
3. Skill in problem recognition and definition, diagnosis, analysis, and in finding alternative solution T/F
4. Ability to use objective data and anecdotal information when considering or conducting performance assessments T/F
5. Skill in creating an internal cadre of snitches T/F
6. Knowledge of the Trial Court Performance Standards and the accompanying assessment and measurement system T/F
7. Skill in using performance measurement, resource allocation tools, and benchmarking to measure program costs, court performance, and outcomes T/F
8. Knowledge of the latest management fads and how to apply a new one every six months T/F
9. Skill in making adjustments based on assessments of how well the court is doing T/F

CONTINUAL DIAGNOSIS

The Court User

Numerous researchers have surveyed citizens about their expectations of organizations that serve them. Although they do not expect perfection, they do hold those organizations accountable for certain behaviors, as follows:

- Information and communication
- Responsiveness
- Rapid recovery from mistakes
- Problem resolution
- On-time, reliable, consistent service delivery
- Competent personnel
- Accuracy
- Courteous and friendly service
- Empathy for customer

21st CENTURY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Stop concentrating on the leader
- See leadership as an episodic affair of a group (not a desired way of life of a single individual)
- Educate people to use influence, not authority
- Develop people to work in a non-coercive relationship
- Develop people's collaborative skills
- Build trust among diverse people (leadership relationships are based on mutual trust)

– *Joseph Rost*

FINAL EXERCISE

Wrap-Up: Individual Action Planning

Based on the strategies just presented, along with any other ideas generated, respond to the following questions.

- How will you apply the concepts to your individual work relationships?
- What will be the major impact of these changes on your role as well as on other relationships in the system?
- By when?
- What result do I expect if I do so?